

EPA Region III

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EARLY BIRD HEADLINES

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*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Bay group says cleanup to create more than 230,000 jobs

BALTIMORE SUN Report adds to debate over federal regulations. WASHINGTON— Federal regulations intended to clean the Chesapeake Bay will create hundreds of thousands of jobs in construction and monitoring, according to a report to be released Tuesday by a leading environmental group. Spending on sewage and storm-water treatment alone could support about 230,000 jobs in the region over the next 14 years, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation report found. That spending will be necessary to meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requirements to reduce pollution in the bay. The report comes as a debate rages in Washington over whether environmental and other regulations hurt the economy. Business groups and Republicans in the House of Representatives have called for repealing many federal rules, while environmentalists and Democrats in the Senate have resisted the effort. "Clean air and clean water creates jobs," said William C. Baker, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's president, who said the argument that environmental regulations add to joblessness is "nothing less than absurd." Republicans took control of the House in the 2010 midterm election in part on a promise to eliminate federal regulations that they say hamper economic growth at a time of high unemployment. The GOP platform stated that "excessive federal regulation is a de facto tax on employers and consumers that stifles job creation." Since then, the House has passed a series of bills to roll back specific rules and change the way regulations are drafted. In February, House lawmakers approved a provision by Virginia Republican Rep. Bob Goodlatte that would have cut funding for a bay restoration plan to limit the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment released into the water. EPA regulations require bay states to cut those pollutants by 15 percent to 25 percent by 2025. Goodlatte called the effort overzealous and said it would result in "billions of dollars in economic losses."

Report: Environmental regulations don't hurt the economy

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH Environmental regulations do not hurt the economy, according to a new report released today by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Putting limits on bay pollution will not only help the bay but will also stimulate job growth as people work on improving sewage-treatment plants and similar projects, said the report, entitled "Debunking the 'Job Killer' Myth." "For years, opponents of environmental regulations have argued that they cost jobs and hurt businesses. That is not borne out by the facts," said the bay foundation's president, William C. Baker, in a statement. William M. Shobe, a University of Virginia environmental economist who was not involved in the report, said the relationship between environmental regulations and the economy is "a little bit complicated." Well-designed regulations encourage cleanups by businesses and sewage plants that release pollution, which hurts people or the environment, but don't pay for it, Shobe said. Spending to comply with new regulations — say, adding new pollution controls — can aid the economy, Shobe said. "If regulations are well-designed and appropriate, they should create more benefits than

costs." In one example, Shobe said, "we know that better water quality results in higher property values near the bay. There have been plenty of studies to show that." To avoid being onerous, regulations should give businesses flexibility in solving their problems, Shobe said. The new report cited the 1990 amendments to the federal Clean Air Act as just one case in which opponents said the tighter air-pollution limits would hurt businesses. Ultimately, the benefits far outweighed costs, the report said. Shobe said most experts agree that, "on net, the clean-air rules have had a positive economic contribution." But poorly designed regulations can create more costs than benefits, he said.

Editorial: Chesapeake Bay: Cleanup takes effort

BALTIMORE SUN Our view: Local government leaders may bemoan its costs and red tape, but bay restoration requires more than a business-as-usual approach to pollution. There's a popular saying in the halls of the State House in Annapolis: "Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die." It's used most often to describe government's classic conundrum — as laudable as a goal might be, people would rather not sacrifice to attain it. That could well describe the flotilla of local government leaders who continue to protest bitterly over the projected cost of a Chesapeake Bay cleanup and Gov. Martin O'Malley's PlanMaryland curbs on taxpayer-supported sprawl. The cleanup plan has them not only worried about the possible billions of dollars involved but also attacking the basic science and assumptions behind the multistate bay restoration effort led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. And it's not just the rural counties that are fighting the EPA's "pollution diet" and steps the O'Malley administration is taking to help Maryland meet its long-term targets — including the anti-sprawl regulations and proposed restrictions on residential septic systems. Baltimore City and some suburban counties have expressed concerns, too, as plans call for major new investments to curb storm water runoff and other sources of pollution...Some counties did not even bother to submit cleanup plans. Carroll County handed in a report that described all the pollution-fighting measures county government has taken in the past but did not list a single additional step the county would be willing to take to meet EPA targets. State officials were left to recommend actions instead... Eventually, local governments can be forced to take action. That's what the EPA and the Maryland Department of the Environment had to do to get Baltimore to upgrade its wastewater system — and keep tens of millions of gallons of sewage out of local waterways. But going through the courts inevitably costs time and money that could be spent on the cleanup. Better for voters to let their feelings be known and tell their elected leaders they expect their town, county or city to do its share. No county executive, city council member or the like will stand up and advocate for dirty water. But when they refuse to take action to improve the bay's health, that's essentially what they are doing.

Chesapeake Bay Foundation report says cleanup will create hundreds or thousands of jobs

ASSOCIATED PRESS RICHMOND, Va. — A report by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation concludes that storm water and sewage plant upgrades intended to help nurse the environmentally-battered bay back to health would create nearly 250,000 jobs. The report released Tuesday is aimed at countering claims that the multi-state, multi-billion restoration directed by the Environmental Protection Agency will be harmful to the economy and result in job losses, the foundation's president said. "That is not borne out by the facts," William C. Baker said in a statement. "Whether the target is EPA or the bay pollution limits, it is essential that the public understand that environmental regulations will create jobs to reduce pollution, and sustain jobs that depend on clean water." The report, called "Debunking the 'Job Killer' Myth," relies on a variety of industry experts such as engineers, reports and other sources to assess the impact of water pollution projects within the six states and the District of Columbia that comprise the bay's 64,000-square-mile watershed. It also reviews job-killing threats dating back to 1976 and Henry Ford II claimed that clean air and fuel efficiency standards would "shut down" Ford Motor Co. to illustrate historic claims that environmental efforts are bad for the economy. The report found instead that sewage and storm water projects could provide work for 240,000 full-time jobs across the bay region — engineering jobs, construction and other employment for new pollution-control projects. The job projections include the so-called multiplier effect, or jobs created as a result of economic activity because of those upgrades. "Those jobs are going

to be concentrated in the large metropolitan areas because that's where the greatest concentration of sewage and storm water occurs," Baker said. Two key bay states, Virginia and Maryland, plan to invest a total of \$3 billion to upgrade sewage treatment plants over more than a decade. That activity alone would create an estimated 60,000 jobs, the report said.

EPA: Dimock water supplies 'merit further investigation'

SCRANTON TIMES (Dec. 31) Federal environmental regulators are reopening their review of Dimock Twp. water supplies after recently released tests of the water wells taken by a natural gas drilling contractor were found to "merit further investigation." Officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency were in Dimock Thursday and Friday to visit residents whose water supplies were found by state regulators to have been tainted with methane from Cabot Oil and Gas Corp.'s Marcellus Shale drilling operations. After a preliminary review of results from water tests taken earlier by the state, Cabot and other outside firms, the EPA wrote to the residents on Dec. 2 to say the information they had gathered "does not indicate that the well water presents an immediate health threat to users." But in an information sheet provided to residents during visits this week, the EPA wrote that it "has recently received additional Cabot data from residents that merit further investigation." The EPA is now "concerned about" potential gaps in water sampling and test results, the number of water supplies potentially affected, if residents that need them have alternate sources of fresh drinking water, and if residents have any more data to share...Victoria Switzer, one of the affected Dimock residents, was visited Thursday evening by EPA officials. "Something in the water disturbed them," she said. "They were very concerned about what they were seeing."

Scientist believes drilling injections set off Youngstown earthquakes

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW Injecting drilling wastewater and other brine deep underground probably caused several earthquakes near Youngstown in 2011, according to a scientist who is helping Ohio study the tremors. Eastern Ohio had 11 earthquakes since March, and their pattern and power isn't normal for the region or natural quakes, said John Armbruster, a seismologist at Columbia University. Natural quakes usually have one main shock and several aftershocks. These have been getting larger, spread out over several months, in an area where that type of regular seismic activity isn't common, Armbruster said. "Things look different than they did before," Armbruster said on Monday. "It's not absolute proof, but it seems the doubt in my mind is small based on my 40 years' experience studying earthquakes." A 4.0 quake on Saturday was the latest to hit the region, centered five miles northwest of Youngstown, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The day before, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources halted operations at a deep-injection disposal well fewer than three miles away. After Saturday's quake, the department put a moratorium on four other disposal wells that were about to open nearby. "The way we're looking at it, there's enough correlation," said Andy Ware, the department's deputy director, noting the depth of the weekend quake was closer to the well bottom than the previous quakes had been. "Putting all that together, we think it's reasonable to halt all future injections within a five-mile radius until we have a better understanding of what may be causing the seismic activity." Officials at the site's owner, Northstar Disposal Services LLC, and the affiliated company, D&L Energy Inc., could not be reached for comment. Armbruster, Ohio state scientists and a researcher at Youngstown State University set up four seismographs around the injection well in early December, Armbruster said. Their data led state officials to ask for the well shutdown on Friday, Ware said. The quake on Saturday happened within 24 hours of the shutdown, possibly from pressure still built up, Ware said. Armbruster hoped to have data from that quake by last night, but collection may have been delayed by snow, he said by phone from New York. Fluid disposal increased in Ohio in 2011 likely because Pennsylvania gas drillers were shipping more wastewater across the border, Ohio officials said last summer. Ohio has a growing number of injection wells, now at 177, compared with six in Pennsylvania, where there isn't as much cheap, permeable and available space underground.

Ohio closes wastewater disposal wells after earthquakes

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE A series of earthquakes in northwestern Ohio, the latest and largest

on New Year's Eve, has prompted that state's Department of Natural Resources to close or suspend development by natural gas drillers of five deep wastewater disposal wells pending an investigation into well impact on increased seismic activity in the area. The latest earthquake, registering a magnitude of 4.0, was centered five miles northwest of Youngstown and very close to the 9,000-foot-deep Northstar No. 1 disposal well owned by D&L Energy, which receives most of its brine and fracking wastewater from Marcellus Shale drilling operations in Pennsylvania. The Ohio DNR had halted wastewater injections at the Northstar disposal well Friday after analyzing new seismic data from a 2.7-magnitude Dec. 24 earthquake, one of 10 smaller tremors that occurred in the area during 2011. After the New Year's Eve quake, which occurred at 3:05 p.m. and rattled dishes but caused no structural property damage or injuries, the DNR also halted development of four new wastewater injection wells within 5 miles of the Northstar well that were slated to open for business in the next few weeks. "We evaluated the new research, and it shows the Dec. 24 seismic event occurred within 2,000 feet of the well injection point," said Andy Ware, Ohio DNR deputy director. "We can't say for sure that it's linked to the well, but we'll keep the operations shut down for an indefinite period until we can get an accurate picture of what's going on here. We think that's a prudent and proper response to protecting the health and safety of Ohio residents."

Wastewater disposal wells under scrutiny following Irvin leak

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has fined Exco Resources \$159,624 for a leaking underground pipe at its Irvin drilling wastewater disposal well in a remote, forested area of Clearfield County that the company failed to report for four months. That structural failure of the Exco well, one of six oil and gas drilling wastewater disposal wells operating in Pennsylvania, has raised worries about the operation and regulation of the others and also about drilling company interest in siting about two dozen additional deep disposal wells throughout the state. One of those proposed disposal wells could be built just 900 feet from the home drinking water well of Marianne and Rick Atkinson, who live about two miles outside DuBois in Clearfield County. Windfall Oil & Gas, headquartered in Reynoldsville, Jefferson County, sent a required notice to the Atkinsons and other local residents in November but has not yet submitted an application to the EPA. "The Exco injection well is in Bell Township, a sparsely populated area 17 miles away from us, but here we live in a rural but more populated area with 20 homes within a quarter mile and many more just outside that," Ms. Atkinson said. "If a [disposal] well goes bad in our neighborhood, then none of us will have any well water." The problems at the Exco well in Bell Township began in April, when the company first noticed a breach or "failed mechanical integrity" in one of the piping, casing and cement layers of the 7,000-foot-deep disposal well, according to Roger Reinhart, compliance and enforcement team leader for the Underground Injection Program in the EPA's Philadelphia regional office. Dallas-based Exco didn't report the problem to an EPA field inspector until August and continued to accept tanker truckloads of brine and wastewater from its own Marcellus Shale gas well drilling operations until then. Also, for three months in 2010 the company operated the well at an injection pressure higher than its 2005 EPA permit allowed. The well has been shut down since August. Under terms of the EPA consent agreement and final order it signed, the company is required to repair the well and conduct and pass mechanical integrity tests with an EPA field inspector present before it can begin to accept wastewater again. Exco officials could not be reached for comment.

McDonnell's funds cut for Potomac panel challenged

WASHINGTON TIMES RICHMOND — A Virginia appointee to a multistate commission charged with cleaning and maintaining the Potomac River has released a scathing letter refuting the McDonnell administration's justification for cutting funds to the 71-year-old compact. Rob Hartwell, an appointee of Gov. Bob McDonnell's to the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB), said in the letter that withholding the relatively modest \$151,500 annual appropriation jeopardizes other cost-sharing federal programs and EPA grants as well as state-based conservation programs dependent on the funding. "I wanted to point out some glaring errors ... and most importantly, show that it will cost Virginia at least \$530,000 should this decision be enacted by the General Assembly," he wrote in his Dec. 7 letter, which he released after a report in The Washington Times on the cost-cutting decision by the Republican governor's administration. Mr. Hartwell's letter contests, point-by-point, an Oct.

27 letter from Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources Doug Domenech explaining why the state cut the funding to the commission, which has been existence since 1940, with Virginia one of its founding members. Among the reasons, Mr. Domenech wrote that the work of the commission often is duplicative of work performed by other multistate groups, such as the Chesapeake Bay Commission. Withdrawing, Mr. Domenech said, would not hurt the state's larger effort of helping clean the Bay or following through on other water-resource programs.

"Unfortunately, no examples are given, and I cannot find anywhere that this is the case," Mr. Hartwell wrote in his response to Mr. McDonnell. "As your appointee on the Commission, it is important that I represent Virginia's interests and I have found that the programs being funded are unique and would not be offered unless Virginia chose to hire new staff at agencies or contract out for services that would be much more expensive than those provided by ICPRB."

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Farewell to the old 100-watter (Jan. 1) Sunday marks the dawn of a new era of lighting. The incandescent bulb as we know it is on its way out. New federal standards that require bulbs to be more efficient are leading to the demise of the old 100-watter, with other wattages to follow. But rest assured, panic-stricken public. New incandescents that put out the same amount of light but use 25 percent less energy are taking the old bulbs' place. "Incandescent bulbs aren't going away. They're just getting better," said Noah Horowitz, senior scientist with the Natural Resources Defense Council, a national environmental group. That, plus an onslaught of even more efficient bulbs - those swirly compact fluorescents and high-tech LEDs - mean consumers now have more options to reduce their electric bills than ever before. The new bulbs are more expensive - some significantly so. But, ultimately, researchers estimate the new government efficiency standards will save the typical household \$100 to \$200 a year in electricity costs. The saving for homes and businesses nationwide could add up to more than \$10 billion annually and avert the need for 30 new power plants, proponents say. Expecting confusion, stores are ramping up their education efforts. Lowe's is putting up informational signs and has produced an online video showing how to pick a new bulb. Home Depot has scheduled lighting clinics on Saturdays throughout January. CFL bulbs are getting prime real estate at check-out counters.

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Ohio closes wastewater disposal wells after earthquakes A series of earthquakes in northwestern Ohio, the latest and largest on New Year's Eve, has prompted that state's Department of Natural Resources to close or suspend development by natural gas drillers of five deep wastewater disposal wells pending an investigation into well impact on increased seismic activity in the area. The latest earthquake, registering a magnitude of 4.0, was centered five miles northwest of Youngstown and very close to the 9,000-foot-deep Northstar No. 1 disposal well owned by D&L Energy, which receives most of its brine and fracking wastewater from Marcellus Shale drilling operations in Pennsylvania. The Ohio DNR had halted wastewater injections at the Northstar disposal well Friday after analyzing new seismic data from a 2.7-magnitude Dec. 24 earthquake, one of 10 smaller tremors that occurred in the area during 2011.

Wastewater disposal wells under scrutiny following Irvin leak The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has fined Exco Resources \$159,624 for a leaking underground pipe at its Irvin drilling wastewater disposal well in a remote, forested area of Clearfield County that the company failed to report for four months. That structural failure of the Exco well, one of six oil and gas drilling wastewater disposal wells operating in Pennsylvania, has raised worries about the operation and regulation of the others and also about drilling company interest in siting about two dozen additional deep disposal wells throughout the state. One of those proposed disposal wells could be built just

900 feet from the home drinking water well of Marianne and Rick Atkinson, who live about two miles outside DuBois in Clearfield County. Windfall Oil & Gas, headquartered in Reynoldsville, Jefferson County, sent a required notice to the Atkinsons and other local residents in November but has not yet submitted an application to the EPA. "The Exco injection well is in Bell Township, a sparsely populated area 17 miles away from us, but here we live in a rural but more populated area with 20 homes within a quarter mile and many more just outside that," Ms. Atkinson said. "If a [disposal] well goes bad in our neighborhood, then none of us will have any well water." The problems at the Exco well in Bell Township began in April, when the company first noticed a breach or "failed mechanical integrity" in one of the piping, casing and cement layers of the 7,000-foot-deep disposal well, according to Roger Reinhart, compliance and enforcement team leader for the Underground Injection Program in the EPA's Philadelphia regional office. Dallas-based Exco didn't report the problem to an EPA field inspector until August and continued to accept tanker truckloads of brine and wastewater from its own Marcellus Shale gas well drilling operations until then. Also, for three months in 2010 the company operated the well at an injection pressure higher than its 2005 EPA permit allowed. The well has been shut down since August. Under terms of the EPA consent agreement and final order it signed, the company is required to repair the well and conduct and pass mechanical integrity tests with an EPA field inspector present before it can begin to accept wastewater again. Exco officials could not be reached for comment.

Editorial: Sticky spot: Goo should not cause motorists to be stuck again (Jan. 2) The new federal budget includes \$300 million more to restore the Great Lakes, with much of that earmarked to help clean up pollution of harbors and streams. It sounds like a substantial sum, but it's not enough, even in a period of fiscal austerity. During his 2008 campaign, candidate Barack Obama pledged \$5 billion in funding over a decade for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative -- the most comprehensive needs inventory ever for a regional watershed. The rationale is obvious: The Great Lakes account for 20 percent of Earth's fresh water. The lakes are vital to North America's economy and the primary source of drinking water for 30 million Americans. President George W. Bush launched the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in 2005, but did not fund it. Elected officials in lake states and other interested parties identified more than \$20 billion in needs. Congress must place a higher value on the lakes. Mr. Obama sought \$350 million in funding in the 2012 budget, after getting \$475 million and \$299 million in 2010 and 2011, respectively. Environmental groups said they were grateful lawmakers provided as much money to the initiative as they did. While this year's funding buys time, it is not cause for celebration. The lakes continue to suffer from algae pollution and other ills. Yet the new budget cuts by 3.5 percent the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which provides federal grants to help local communities address chronic sewage overflows. That fund is the largest in the Environmental Protection Agency's budget, but the Great Lakes states will receive \$533 million, down from \$552 million in fiscal 2011. The outcome could have been worse, yet Great Lakes funding continues to fall short. A Brookings Institution study shows that every dollar spent on Great Lakes restoration yields twice as much in economic impact. The lakes deserve every attempt to get meaningful funding back on track.

Driller can use private roads (Jan. 2) An Allegheny County trial judge has ruled that a drilling company has not significantly burdened the residents along two private roads it used to transport equipment to an oil and gas well. Allegheny County Common Pleas Court Judge Alan Hertzberg denied a motion for preliminary injunction filed by several residents who had claimed the driller's use and maintenance of the roads had unreasonably burdened them. Judge Hertzberg said the driller's trucks were no more burdensome than the garbage trucks, mail trucks and construction vehicles that have long been permitted on those roads. "Since Marco Drilling's use of the private roads was reasonable, it cannot be prohibited from using them," he said. In *Auth v. Marco Drilling Inc.*, according to Judge Hertzberg, 46 people who own land or dwellings along private roads Melody Lane and Large Drive in Indiana Township sued defendant Marco Drilling for using these private roads, which are the plaintiffs' sole means of access to public roads.

Harvest and profits lift farmers' optimism U.S. farmers are more optimistic about their current and future economic situation than they were in September after profitable harvests, according to a survey-based index produced by DTN/The Progressive Farmer. Farmers rated their confidence in the agricultural economy with an index score of 109.8, compared with 107.7 in September, the agricultural news service said Monday in a report.

Natural gas prices through March fall An increased supply of natural gas -- thanks in part to development in the Marcellus Shale -- as well as warmer weather patterns have lead to lower gas prices for Western Pennsylvania customers in the first quarter of 2012. All three utility providers in the region announced lower rates Friday for the quarter starting Jan. 1 and extending through March 31. Equitable Gas customers will pay an average of \$89.09 per month in the coming quarter, down \$2.03 from the quarter ending today. That's a quarterly gas rate of \$6.27 per Mcf, down 24 cents. Columbia Gas customers will see an average monthly bill of \$70.97 -- down \$4.67 from the previous quarter. Columbia Gas customers will pay a rate cost of \$5.24 per Mcf, a decrease of 28 cents. Peoples Natural Gas decreased its average monthly bill amount by \$3 to \$79 per month in the coming quarter. The company's gas cost rate fell 36 cents to \$5.16 per Mcf. Equitable Gas spokesman Scott Waitlevertch attributed the decrease to the development of the Marcellus Shale and other natural gas plays across the country, as well as the warmer-than-usual weather that's kept demand low at the start of the winter.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

Nuclear cleanup starts slowly (Dec. 30) As the Army Corps of Engineers shuts down most of the cleanup operations for the season at the nuclear waste dump in Parks Township, the agency ended up excavating only about half of what was planned. This was the first year of a potentially decade-long, \$170 million cleanup of the 44-acre dump of radioactive and chemical waste generated by the former Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corp. (NUMEC) nuclear fuel plant in Apollo and plutonium process facility in Parks. "The plan was to dig this year and dig slowly," said Col. Butch Graham, commander of the Corps' Pittsburgh District. "Then we would evaluate the plan, update the plan and move to the next construction season." This summer, the Corps excavated about halfway through two of 10 trenches where nuclear-contaminated soils, production materials, even clothing and other items was buried from 1960 until about 1970, according to government records. "The site conditions were at the higher end of the complexity scale," Graham said of the partial excavation of the two trenches so far. "When we started, we planned to deal with a whole spectrum (of waste). We know that the contents of the trenches were unknown, and we won't know until we dig up the trenches." Although the Corps planned to excavate at the site until winter, the agency announced in mid-October that it ceased digging and was investigating the alleged mishandling of nuclear waste by its prime contractor Cabrera Services of East Hartford, Conn.

Scientist believes drilling injections set off Youngstown earthquakes Injecting drilling wastewater and other brine deep underground probably caused several earthquakes near Youngstown in 2011, according to a scientist who is helping Ohio study the tremors. Eastern Ohio had 11 earthquakes since March, and their pattern and power isn't normal for the region or natural quakes, said John Armbruster, a seismologist at Columbia University. Natural quakes usually have one main shock and several aftershocks. These have been getting larger, spread out over several months, in an area where that type of regular seismic activity isn't common, Armbruster said. "Things look different than they did before," Armbruster said on Monday. "It's not absolute proof, but it seems the doubt in my mind is small based on my 40 years' experience studying earthquakes." A 4.0 quake on Saturday was the latest to hit the region, centered five miles northwest of Youngstown, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The day before, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources halted operations at a deep-injection disposal well fewer than three miles away. After Saturday's quake, the department put a moratorium on four other disposal wells that were about to open nearby. "The way we're looking at it, there's enough correlation," said Andy Ware, the department's deputy director, noting the depth of the weekend quake was closer to the well bottom than the previous quakes had been. "Putting all that together, we think it's reasonable to halt all future injections within a five-mile radius until we have a better understanding of what may be causing the seismic activity." Officials at the site's owner, Northstar Disposal Services LLC, and the affiliated company, D&L Energy Inc., could not be reached for comment. Armbruster, Ohio state scientists and a researcher at Youngstown State University set up four seismographs around the injection well in early December, Armbruster said. Their data led state officials to ask for the well shutdown on Friday, Ware said. The quake on Saturday happened within 24 hours of the shutdown, possibly from pressure still built up, Ware said. Armbruster hoped to have data from that quake by last night, but collection may have been delayed by snow, he said by phone from New York. Fluid disposal increased in Ohio in 2011 likely because Pennsylvania gas drillers were shipping more wastewater across the border, Ohio officials said last summer. Ohio

has a growing number of injection wells, now at 177, compared with six in Pennsylvania, where there isn't as much cheap, permeable and available space underground.

Surface mining company eyes land near Freeport's golf complex A surface-mining company is inquiring about land located in the northern portion of the borough near The Phoenix at Buffalo Valley golf complex. Amerikohl Mining of Stahlstown was advised by borough Council President Donald Rehner to seek a variance through the zoning hearing board if it wants to further pursue a project. Rehner said the company was given copies of the zoning regulations but hasn't submitted any requests to the zoning board. The property in question is zoned suburban residential. Amerikohl's website says the company mines about 1 million tons of coal annually and specializes in land restoration.

ERIE TIMES-NEWS

Region digs out from first big lake-effect snowstorm of season The region's first major lake-effect snowstorm of the season isn't over yet. Forecasters expect additional accumulations this morning after calling for more heavy snow later Monday. Some areas could have up to 2 feet of new snow by this afternoon, when the lake-effect snow warning is scheduled to expire. Forecasters are warning motorists to be cautious on snow-covered roads, and to expect considerable blowing and drifting snow. That's quite a contrast from Saturday, when operators of Mount Pleasant of Edinboro stared at grass on their hillsides and wondered when they would be covered in snow. By Monday, Doug Sinsabaugh, outside-operations manager of the Washington Township skiing, snowboarding and tubing park, wondered how much of the falling snow would sink into the unfrozen and muddy ground before other layers would begin piling on top, allowing the park to finally open for the winter. Sinsabaugh had plenty of snow to wonder about. The lake-effect storm slammed into Erie County and areas south and southeast of the county Sunday night, blanketing some locations with more than a foot of snow by late Monday morning. Accumulations measured by midmorning included 3 inches in Waterford, 4 inches in North East, 7 inches in Corry and 11.2 inches in Canadota Lake. Other areas reported greater snowfall totals that weren't reported to the National Weather Service in Cleveland, which had officially measured 1.8 inches of new snow at Erie International Airport. Those areas included Mount Pleasant, where Sinsabaugh measured 16 to 18 inches of snow.

BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES

County helps plans move forward on former Krupp site Since the 18-acre Superfund property that previously housed the Krupp Foundry was remediated about a decade ago, Quakertown area officials have debated its use. Everything from senior housing to moving the YMCA there has been discussed for the former industrial complex at Mill and Fourth streets. One project that took hold on six of the acres was the building of the James A. Michener branch of the Bucks County Free Library. However, after Bucks County commissioners agreed in December to kick in \$333,000 in open space money, the remaining 12 acres near Memorial Park, area ballfields and the Quakertown Pool will facilitate "passive recreation improvements," according to county Open Space Coordinator Kris Kern. Most of the land Quakertown plans for "passive recreation" is owned by the borough but sits in Richland. "We are working with Richland with this, but it will be entirely our project," Scott McElree, Quakertown's manager, told commissioners. Kerns said improvements to the Krupp site will include walking trails and will "enhance connectivity." In their final meeting of 2011, commissioners also approved \$518,000 to purchase 18 acres in Tinicum for parkland, ballfields and a walking trail. Nick Forte, a township supervisor, said the municipality had no ballfield and developing the area consistent with its open space plan "gives us a chance to give young people a place to play ball."

ALLENTOWN MORNING CALL

King Coal makes comeback as fuel supply ALLENTOWN, Pa. — When Peter Kupec was a boy, his mother cooked on a coal stove in the kitchen that heated the whole house. Now 80, Kupec still uses coal to heat his Lansford home in Pennsylvania's anthracite region, which is estimated to have billions of tons of coal deposits to fuel industry and warm living rooms for centuries. So he was surprised when he called a dealer a few weeks back to buy two tons of coal. "They said 'My God, I don't know when we can deliver it,'" Kupec said. "It might be six to

eight weeks. There's no coal." Global demand and renewed popularity for the low-cost fuel have combined to put a strain on Pennsylvania anthracite supplies with a rather surprising result. People in the coal region are having trouble finding fuel for their stoves and furnaces. There's plenty of coal in the ground. But miners can't dig it up fast enough to satisfy an uptick in demand from dealers who want to ship it overseas or truck it to a house down the road. Much of the coal is purchased on contract by large industrial users before it's even extracted. The situation underscores the complexities of global energy markets, showing how trade decisions and business climates in Asia and South America influence the relationship between a Pennsylvania coal hauler and local customers. It also shows how coal, which over the past 60 years has faded from its position as a dominant home heating fuel to a small niche market, is making a comeback in the face of high oil costs. A ton of coal, which can cost about \$180 in the coal region, provides the same amount of heat as 180 gallons of heating oil, which would cost \$630

HARRISBURGH PATRIOT NEWS

Commentary: Pennsylvania budget crisis fixes can be found News that our commonwealth is confronting yet another budget crisis as we begin this year reminds me of the old cliché that lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine. In the case of our state budget and a projected \$500 million revenue shortfall, however, the issue is a lack of action in Harrisburg — not a deficit in planning. The fact is that the Legislature and Gov. Corbett can choose from a wide array of viable, fiscally sound options for closing the projected deficit. The Corbett administration has the opportunity to make some long-overdue improvements to the state's tax structure. First, the math: Budget Secretary Charles Zogby tells us that halfway through this fiscal year, our revenue is roughly \$345 million below projections. By June 30, the end of this fiscal year, we can expect revenue to be \$500 million below forecast.

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett's first year in office called a mixed bag Gov. Tom Corbett's first year in office started strong, but was followed by a stumbling fall marked by missed opportunities that might haunt the administration for years to come. Corbett signed a budget that didn't raise taxes or eviscerate programs to hurt the needy, and he finished it on time. He showed strong crisis leadership in natural disasters. Many of his closest allies are still so pleased with the cost-cutting budget that his first year represents a clear success. Pennsylvania remains a state without a taxpayer-financed voucher program that would allow parents to move kids out of failing schools — appropriately in the eyes of some, tragically for others. Natural gas drillers pump away in the Marcellus Shale regions, with no over-arching state policy or impact fees in place to deal with the boom or to aid lagging state revenues.

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

EPA: Dimock water supplies 'merit further investigation' (Dec. 31) Federal environmental regulators are reopening their review of Dimock Twp. water supplies after recently released tests of the water wells taken by a natural gas drilling contractor were found to "merit further investigation." Officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency were in Dimock Thursday and Friday to visit residents whose water supplies were found by state regulators to have been tainted with methane from Cabot Oil and Gas Corp.'s Marcellus Shale drilling operations. After a preliminary review of results from water tests taken earlier by the state, Cabot and other outside firms, the EPA wrote to the residents on Dec. 2 to say the information they had gathered "does not indicate that the well water presents an immediate health threat to users." But in an information sheet provided to residents during visits this week, the EPA wrote that it "has recently received additional Cabot data from residents that merit further investigation." The EPA is now "concerned about" potential gaps in water sampling and test results, the number of water supplies potentially affected, if residents that need them have alternate sources of fresh drinking water, and if residents have any more data to share...Victoria Switzer, one of the affected Dimock residents, was visited Thursday evening by EPA officials. "Something in the water disturbed them," she said. "They were very concerned about what they were seeing."

New truck fleet to help company compete in shale era A Scranton-based logistics provider recently spent more than \$6 million to acquire 50 new truck tractors. Kane Is Able Inc., which provides warehousing and transportation

services and has about 1,000 employees nationally, will replace about 75 percent of its local fleet with the new vehicles, marketing director Alex Stark said. The lightweight, automatic-transmission tractors will average about 7 miles per gallon, a fuel efficiency increase of at least 40 percent over the vehicles being replaced, Mr. Stark said. The investment will save the company about 343,000 gallons of diesel fuel yearly, a \$1.3 million reduction in fuel expenses, he said. Kane's acquisition occurs as the regional trucking sector experiences increasing competitive pressure from the expanding Marcellus Shale natural gas industry. "It's not a secret that we are battling every day against Marcellus," Mr. Stark said. "The new trucks are definitely a selling tool for us." The regional natural gas industry employs truck drivers with commercial drivers licenses to haul water, stone, sand, pipe and other drilling-related materials. Local specialized freight trucking employment related to Marcellus Shale development expanded to 11,454 statewide in the first quarter of 2011, up 2.5 percent from the third quarter of 2010, according to the latest state Department of Labor and Industry data.

Benton monitoring of gas well called "the right thing to do" As the state General Assembly considers legislation to curb local control of natural gas drilling, an experiment in local oversight of an exploratory Marcellus Shale well in Benton Twp. has been an "unequivocal" success, a supervisor said. An independent engineer hired by Benton is monitoring the drilling and construction of a well by Southwestern Energy Production Co. that will evaluate the gas-bearing potential of the shale more than a mile below a field off Route 407. The idea, Supervisor Larry Seymour said, is "monitoring as opposed to controlling" the operation. "The issue really is getting the desired outcomes and avoiding unanticipated negative consequences." Michael F. Pokalsky, a petroleum engineer and the owner of Blue Flame Energy LLC, witnessed critical procedures, including the installation of steel casing and cement that seal off gas and fluids in the well from the drinking-water aquifer as well as pressure tests to ensure the strength of the cement barrier. All of those operations were completed without incident, Mr. Pokalsky said. The engineer had no regulatory authority but could have alerted state regulators if he had seen any problems. Before and after drilling began on Nov. 28, Mr. Pokalsky was given broad access to the site at all hours of the day. He offered the township information, explanations and peace of mind. "I go out there for critical operations from start to finish so the town has their own witness and they know it was done properly," he said.

WNEP-TV

More Water Tests Possible for Dimock Residents (Dec. 30) The controversy over clean drinking water in one part of Susquehanna County continues. Weeks after state environmental officials said drinking water in Dimock was not tainted by natural gas drilling, federal officials are now re-examining the case. After the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection announced its findings a few weeks ago, Cabot Oil and Gas was no longer required to deliver clean water to residents on Carter Road in Dimock. Now, environmental officials on the federal level said more tests may need to be done. A few weeks ago, dozens of people protested a DEP decision that ended free water delivery to the homes in Susquehanna County. Aside from such protesting by neighbors, the issue was seemingly resolved. According to the DEP, the drinking water was not tainted by natural gas drilling in the area. Now, federal officials from the Environmental Protection Agency are gathering information to see if more water tests need to be done. "They kind of sided in with the DEP's findings, and now, I think that they're changing their mind. There's some other stuff that's coming out that they're not satisfied with," said Ronald Carter. He lives on Carter Road and said that's what EPA officials told him when they gave him a questionnaire this week.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

'Ghosts' haunt creatures on bay's bottom (Jan. 1) GLOUCESTER POINT, Va. — Under the murky waters of the York River, an eerie blur appeared suddenly on Edward Hogge's sonar, near where his 40-foot deadrise boat sailed about a mile offshore on a cool December morning. Hogge made a hard right turn. "I'm going back to get it," he said. He called out to his wife and first mate, Cheryl. "All right, honey, get your gloves on. Get ready!" When the boat stopped, she tossed a long rope lined with hooks overboard and yanked it. "It's got something! It's heavy," Cheryl Hogge said. Be warned: This is a ghost story. A hidden killer haunts marine life in the Chesapeake Bay and

its tributaries: tens of thousands of baited crab traps left behind by watermen each year. These "ghost pots" capture legions of crabs, eels, terrapins, fish, muskrats and even an occasional duck, leaving them to die. For three years starting in 2008, more than 22,000 blue crabs, male and female, were found dead in ghost pots collected by watermen such as the Hogges under a federal and state program that pays for their work. Another 2,600 oyster toadfish, 950 sea snails known as whelks and 430 black sea bass were killed. "It's like a feeding machine," said state Department of Natural Resources Secretary Doug Domenech, who recently sailed with the Hogges to see firsthand how the program partly overseen by his agency works. "Animals get stuck and can't get out. So they . . . become bait for the next animal that comes."

WASHINGTON TIMES

McDonnell's funds cut for Potomac panel challenged RICHMOND — A Virginia appointee to a multistate commission charged with cleaning and maintaining the Potomac River has released a scathing letter refuting the McDonnell administration's justification for cutting funds to the 71-year-old compact. Rob Hartwell, an appointee of Gov. Bob McDonnell's to the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB), said in the letter that withholding the relatively modest \$151,500 annual appropriation jeopardizes other cost-sharing federal programs and EPA grants as well as state-based conservation programs dependent on the funding. "I wanted to point out some glaring errors . . . and most importantly, show that it will cost Virginia at least \$530,000 should this decision be enacted by the General Assembly," he wrote in his Dec. 7 letter, which he released after a report in The Washington Times on the cost-cutting decision by the Republican governor's administration. Mr. Hartwell's letter contests, point-by-point, an Oct. 27 letter from Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources Doug Domenech explaining why the state cut the funding to the commission, which has been existence since 1940, with Virginia one of its founding members. Among the reasons, Mr. Domenech wrote that the work of the commission often is duplicative of work performed by other multistate groups, such as the Chesapeake Bay Commission. Withdrawing, Mr. Domenech said, would not hurt the state's larger effort of helping clean the Bay or following through on other water-resource programs. "Unfortunately, no examples are given, and I cannot find anywhere that this is the case," Mr. Hartwell wrote in his response to Mr. McDonnell. "As your appointee on the Commission, it is important that I represent Virginia's interests and I have found that the programs being funded are unique and would not be offered unless Virginia chose to hire new staff at agencies or contract out for services that would be much more expensive than those provided by ICPRB."

WTOP-RADIO

Study: Restoring the Chesapeake Bay could create 230000 jobs WASHINGTON -- Environmentalists devoted to restoring and protecting the Chesapeake Bay say cleaning the bay not only will produce more crabs and oysters, but also create almost a quarter of a million jobs. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation issued a report on Tuesday that is aimed at "debunking the myth" that environmental regulations kill jobs. "If you look across Maryland, Virginia, the other Chesapeake Bay states, it's predicted that 230,000 jobs will be created to help reduce pollution in the Chesapeake Bay," says Will Baker, foundation president. "It's a cynical myth that cleaning up the water and the air kills jobs." The projections include engineering and construction jobs and also rely on a multiplier effect -- jobs created as a result of increased economic activity based on the improvements. In December 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency ordered Maryland, Virginia, four other states and D.C. to reduce pollution flow into the bay by 25 percent by 2025. But with the economy slumping and the unemployment rate high, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, R-Va., warned in a memo last August that environmental regulations are hampering job creation. A 2001 study by Massachusetts Institute of Technology economist Michael Greenstone found that two decades of clean air amendments aimed at polluting plants caused a loss of 600,000 jobs. But the foundation's report, "Debunking the 'Job Loss' Myth," says Chesapeake Bay cleanup and monitoring jobs increased by 43 percent across the region between 1990 and 2009. Virginia and Maryland are expected to invest as much as \$3 billion over the next 15 years building and upgrading 147 sewage treatment plants. Construction also is underway on stormwater pollution control devices that catch and filter rain water. Montgomery County is spending \$305 million on such systems to limit pollution into the bay. "These are programs which require good technology to be put in place, they have to create jobs," Baker says.

Will raising the flush tax drain development in Md.? (Dec. 30) WASHINGTON - Raising the flush tax in Maryland may become a new pipe line of revenue for the state. Maryland's already got a flush tax, it runs about \$2.50 a month for sewer customers, and \$30 a year for homes on septic systems. The money raised goes to help clean up the Chesapeake Bay. Citing the continued damage to the watershed, Md. Governor Martin O'Malley told reporters he'd consider doubling or tripling the tax. O'Malley says it might make sense to make it a progressive tax. "Right now, there's a flat flush tax, such that a senior citizen living in the 1600 block of North Avenue pays the same flush fee as a single person living in a giant McMansion." Last year, Governor O'Malley also targeted developments where homes are on septic systems. These homes are typically found in rural areas of the state.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

Eel grass returns in Delaware REHOBOTH BEACH -- Eel grass was once a common habitat in the Rehoboth and Indian River bays, but a die-off in the 1930s, followed by poor water quality and clarity, made the underwater plants all but disappear. And with it went some varieties of waterfowl and a critical nursery ground for fish and crabs. But in the last decade, with some careful planning, monitoring and hard work, eel grass has started to make a comeback in places where the water is clear enough to allow it to thrive. And now, the Center for the Inland Bays, working with the nonprofit environmental group Ecosystem Solutions of Edgewater, Md., has planted 120,000 eel grass seeds in the Rehoboth and Indian River bays in an effort to create more eel grass habitat. "They are small, just 3 millimeters long," said Robert F. Murphy, president and executive director of Ecosystem Solutions. "We harvest them from wild populations." Back in the spring, Murphy and a team from the center went to Sinepuxent Bay, which is just south of Ocean City, to gather eel grass seeds.

Commentary: Climate change must be addressed now We are beginning a new year, and the silence in Congress is still deafening. Will there ever be a debate about what should be done to deal with climate change? Oh, you don't "believe" in it? If you do not, please, suspend that belief system for just a few minutes and take a look at what the major scientific organizations in this country say. Go to their web pages. Examine the mountain of evidence that has convinced 97 to 98 percent of climate researchers that climate change is a stark reality, and that human behavior has been a contributing factor to it:

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Carper proposes tapping into potential natural gas industry CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Kanawha County Commission President Kent Carper wants to make a \$50,000 "down payment" on a plan to turn the county into a center for converting vehicles to run on natural gas. A proposal to give the Charleston Area Alliance \$50,000 to help establish a "Kanawha Converts" Consortium will be discussed at a Kanawha County Commission meeting on Thursday. Carper has been in discussion with faculty and staff at Bridgemont Community & Technical College in Montgomery about overseeing a program to take maximum advantage of natural gas technology. "Instead of taking the gas and shipping it off somewhere else, get the downstream jobs right here," Carper suggests. He said the recent exploitation of vast Marcellus Shale gas reserves in West Virginia will put Kanawha County into a position to cash in on all kinds of spinoffs of the natural gas industry. Although state and county officials have long been trying to land an ethane cracker plant in the region, Carper also wants to develop compressed natural gas service stations in the area and develop technology to convert vehicles to run on natural gas. "We can ship them off to South Carolina

to be converted, or we can convert them right here," he said. Carper predicts more and more vehicles will be converted to run on natural gas as more Marcellus Shale gas becomes available. "There is an opportunity here today," Carper said. "There's going to be a huge opportunity to take advantage of this abundant source of natural gas in many ways." The dream of creating vast fleets of clean, natural gas-burning cars and trucks has been tried before. In 1989, Congress passed a bill to provide \$18 billion in federal money for local governments to pursue natural gas vehicles.

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

Gas drilling could improve secondary roads CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Some West Virginia secondary roads could see significant improvement as a result of new laws passed last month to regulate natural gas drilling across the state. A section of the Natural Gas Horizontal Wells Control Act signed by Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin last month requires firms applying for drilling permits with the Department of Environmental Protection enter into agreements with the state Division of Highways to make sure any roads used to access well sites are preserved and maintained. These new agreements could also mean that residents along roads used by drilling companies may end up with better roads once firms have finished the bulk of their work. "We already are seeing it, but I think you'll start seeing more of that," said Brent Walker, communications director for the Department of Transportation. Increased drilling in the Marcellus shale region has taken a toll on secondary roads in the past few years. Hundreds of thousands of West Virginians live along these roads, which were only designed to handle everyday passenger vehicle traffic and accommodate, at most, large emergency vehicles or school buses. Because of that design, when the large equipment haulers or trucks that carry frack water to and from natural gas drilling sites start using these roads, they quickly begin to crumble under the stress. "They're just not built for the weights of these trucks," Walker said. "They're not designed to handle this."

WHEELING INTELLIGENCER

Gastar Plans 24 Wells For Marshall County PROCTOR - Bolstered with wells producing millions of cubic feet of natural gas per day, Gastar Exploration plans to drill 24 wells in Marshall County this year. "We plan to bring on a number of wells over the next several months as we continue to develop these assets and grow production," said Gastar President and Chief Executive Officer J. Russell Porter. "We are finalizing plans for an active 2012 Marcellus drilling program consisting of at least 24 operated horizontal wells in Marshall County." Gastar Vice President-Northeast Michael McCown has said the company plans to invest about \$200 million in West Virginia next year, with the vast majority of this taking place in Marshall County. Gastar began production at the Corley well pad along Rines Ridge Road in southern Marshall County over the last month. The driller initiated production from the Corley 1H, 2H, 3H and 4H wells over the past 30 days. The four wells there are currently producing a combined gross rate of 9.9 million cubic feet of methane natural gas per day, in addition to 680 barrels of natural gas liquids (ethane, propane, butane and pentane) each day. This well site has not been without problems, however. On Dec. 12, a storage tank caught fire at the site along Rines Ridge Road. Gastar and Marshall County Emergency Management Agency officials confirmed that no one was injured during the fire, though residents living within 1 mile of the well head needed to temporarily evacuate their homes during the fire.

Landowners Hope Coal And Gas Dispute Can Be Resolved BELMONT - With the potential for hundreds of millions of dollars at stake, Larry Cain and other Belmont County landowners hope Murray Energy and natural gas drillers can settle their differences. "We just want the opportunity to lease our acres. With horizontal drilling technology, there should be minimal impact to coal operations," said Cain, chairman of the Smith-Goshen Landowners Group. The group consists of about 800 landowners controlling about 47,000 acres in Belmont County, with most of the land located in the central portion of the county in townships like Smith, Goshen, Washington, Wayne, York and Richland. A possible dispute is brewing regarding Murray Energy's plans to conduct coal mining operations in these same townships, as the mining strategy would coincide with the plans of companies like Chesapeake Energy, XTO Energy and Hess Corp. to drill for natural gas and oil in these same areas.

Cracker Plant Battle Heats Up; Ohio, W.Va. Offer Up Tax Incentives WHEELING - A multibillion-dollar ethane

cracker would bring hundreds of direct chemical jobs to West Virginia or Ohio and up to seven times as many related jobs, which has both states offering large tax incentives for the plant. Mountain State leaders have a fight on their hands to attract Royal Dutch Shell's ethane cracker, as Ohio state Sen. Lou Gentile, D-Jefferson, recently joined fellow lawmakers in sending a letter to the global oil and gas titan, asking Shell to build its plant in the Buckeye State. Shell officials have said they plan to build the plant in Ohio, West Virginia or Pennsylvania, with an announcement set for early 2012. Sources with knowledge of the matter said the announcement could come as early as this month. "This would be the largest single economic investment in West Virginia in over 50 years," state Commerce Secretary Keith Burdette said, noting he believes the project could call for an investment of as much as \$5 billion. Previous estimates of project cost were capped at \$2 billion. Burdette also mentioned that, in addition to Shell, at least one other company is looking to locate a cracker in West Virginia. He said the interested companies are looking at sites of at least 250 contiguous acres "from Charleston all the way up to Hancock County."

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL

No. 1: Marcellus shale industry booms in W.Va., but some raise concerns MORGANTOWN -- Even in a year with an unusual gubernatorial election and a redistricting controversy, no topic occupied more minutes of water cooler conversation or more inches of newsprint than the extraction of natural gas from the Marcellus shale. It was a year of academic and governmental studies on shale's economic potential and environmental threat, a year of municipal drilling bans passed and repealed and, most of all, a year of lawmaker wrangling. "Marcellus," the name of a geologic formation, has become shorthand for West Virginians for a complex set of opportunities and concerns. But what drives the hubbub are the technologies that have made the Marcellus, Utica and shales nationwide productive: the horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing that have allowed for fewer, larger wellpads and changed the way natural gas extraction affects the land and people. West Virginia lawmakers' second...

PARKERSBURG NEWS AND SENTINEL

Drilling spurs title searches MARIETTA - There has been a flurry of activity at the Washington County Recorder's Office in recent months, with people who have been hired by oil and gas companies researching properties in the county that could potentially be drilled for oil and natural gas. "It's been crazy," said recorder Tracey Wright. "We had six to eight title searchers every day and now we have 30 to 40 every day. They're doing title research, looking up mineral rights and doing abstracting on peoples' properties." An oil and gas boom is expected to occur in the coming years, as new horizontal drilling technology is used to tap into Marcellus and Utica shale deposits that are present in Ohio and surrounding states. Wright said the office, located on the second floor of the county courthouse on Putnam Street in Marietta, started getting very busy in September. She has added tables and chairs to the office and set them up in the hall, as well, in order to accommodate the researchers. Board of elections officials have also made one of their rooms available for researchers to work in.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

Bay group says cleanup to create more than 230000 jobs Report adds to debate over federal regulations. WASHINGTON— Federal regulations intended to clean the Chesapeake Bay will create hundreds of thousands of jobs in construction and monitoring, according to a report to be released Tuesday by a leading environmental group. Spending on sewage and storm-water treatment alone could support about 230,000 jobs in the region over the next 14 years, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation report found. That spending will be necessary to meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requirements to reduce pollution in the bay. The report comes as a debate rages in Washington over whether environmental and other regulations hurt the economy. Business groups and Republicans in the House of Representatives have called for repealing many federal rules, while environmentalists and Democrats in the Senate have resisted the effort. "Clean air and clean water creates jobs," said William C.

Baker, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's president, who said the argument that environmental regulations add to joblessness is "nothing less than absurd." Republicans took control of the House in the 2010 midterm election in part on a promise to eliminate federal regulations that they say hamper economic growth at a time of high unemployment. The GOP platform stated that "excessive federal regulation is a de facto tax on employers and consumers that stifles job creation." Since then, the House has passed a series of bills to roll back specific rules and change the way regulations are drafted. In February, House lawmakers approved a provision by Virginia Republican Rep. Bob Goodlatte that would have cut funding for a bay restoration plan to limit the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment released into the water. EPA regulations require bay states to cut those pollutants by 15 percent to 25 percent by 2025. Goodlatte called the effort overzealous and said it would result in "billions of dollars in economic losses."

Residents criticize plan to build solar panels at Chimes The Chimes wants to put solar panels on lawn. A proposal to build solar panels on a historic property in Mount Washington has drawn criticism from neighbors who believe it will be an eyesore for some nearby houses.

Editorial: Chesapeake Bay: Cleanup takes effort Our view: Local government leaders may bemoan its costs and red tape, but bay restoration requires more than a business-as-usual approach to pollution. There's a popular saying in the halls of the State House in Annapolis: "Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die." It's used most often to describe government's classic conundrum — as laudable as a goal might be, people would rather not sacrifice to attain it. That could well describe the flotilla of local government leaders who continue to protest bitterly over the projected cost of a Chesapeake Bay cleanup and Gov. Martin O'Malley's Plan Maryland curbs on taxpayer-supported sprawl. The cleanup plan has them not only worried about the possible billions of dollars involved but also attacking the basic science and assumptions behind the multistate bay restoration effort led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. And it's not just the rural counties that are fighting the EPA's "pollution diet" and steps the O'Malley administration is taking to help Maryland meet its long-term targets — including the anti-sprawl regulations and proposed restrictions on residential septic systems. Baltimore City and some suburban counties have expressed concerns, too, as plans call for major new investments to curb storm water runoff and other sources of pollution...Some counties did not even bother to submit cleanup plans. Carroll County handed in a report that described all the pollution-fighting measures county government has taken in the past but did not list a single additional step the county would be willing to take to meet EPA targets. State officials were left to recommend actions instead... Eventually, local governments can be forced to take action. That's what the EPA and the Maryland Department of the Environment had to do to get Baltimore to upgrade its wastewater system — and keep tens of millions of gallons of sewage out of local waterways. But going through the courts inevitably costs time and money that could be spent on the cleanup. Better for voters to let their feelings be known and tell their elected leaders they expect their town, county or city to do its share. No county executive, city council member or the like will stand up and advocate for dirty water. But when they refuse to take action to improve the bay's health, that's essentially what they are doing.

ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL

Our Bay: Legal alliance connects environmentalists, lawyers About three years ago, Russell Stevenson had a seed of an idea: Convince lawyers to spend more of their pro bono efforts on environmental cases. Since then, that seed has sprouted into the Chesapeake Legal Alliance, which is now arranging for millions of dollars worth of legal advice for individuals and small environmental groups in Maryland and beyond. "What has happened since we started the organization has completely validated the theory that I had when I started it, which is that there was a huge lack of legal services available to people who were trying to clean up the bay," said Stevenson, a semi-retired lawyer living in Severna Park. "I think that everything we've seen has validated that premise. There is a great need and we're beginning to fill it." With an annual budget of less than \$100,000 last year, the alliance organized more than \$2 million worth of legal services.

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

Septic dream turns into nightmare System paid for by state grants still has not been installed. MARION STATION -- When Klaus and Nancy Trepczyk were told state grants could help them get a septic system for their new home for free, they thought the offer was a dream come true. On the contrary, Nancy Trepczyk said. "It's a nightmare." A year and a half after installation began, the home the couple hoped to move into last year still does not have a working septic system. The couple also said they have spent much more than they wanted on court fees stemming from a lawsuit filed by their contractor. The Bay Restoration Fund, under which the Trepczyks applied for assistance, has undergone an audit and made significant changes to how the program is administered since they went through the process. Questionable septic system upgrades have also been referred to the Maryland Attorney General's criminal division. While the Trepczyks don't have any issues with the fund or how it was administered, they say the contractor they used signed himself on as an agent, allegedly without their permission. According to the audit, two unnamed contractors were allowed to act as agents for property owners, which allowed them to solicit and collect bids and then adjust their own bids.

Local writer in touch with nature Name: Tom Horton

What type of art do you create? I'm a writer, author of several books on Chesapeake Bay and the environment, and a columnist for the Bay Journal, a monthly publication that covers Chesapeake Bay.

Describe your work: I have freelanced for many publications, from National Geographic and Rolling Stone, to Chesapeake Bay Magazine and the Urbanite in Baltimore; also Audubon Magazine, American Forests Magazine, and New York Times Sunday Magazine.

When did you start writing?

I began writing for the Baltimore Sun in 1972 after leaving the U.S. Army. I have made my living writing ever since.

What inspires you?

I'm inspired by nature, by the Chesapeake Bay, by growing up and living most of my life on the Delmarva peninsula; also by kayaking and bicycling to observe nature. I like traveling at 4 mph (kayak) and 12-15mph (bicycle) -- you can see and hear and smell a lot that way. I'm also inspired by how people interact with the natural landscape and the chesapeake ecosystems, farmers, watermen and other outdoors types.

FREDERICK NEWS POST

Working with nature lands couple state wildlife award Gilbert and LaRue Kelbaugh inherited 30 acres of eroded fields, invasive species of vegetation and lowlands prone to severe flooding. Soil problems that were years in the making took years to fix. With persistence, the Kelbaughs have turned the Rich-Lin Farms acreage on Sundays Lane in Frederick into a haven for wildlife while improving water quality and producing enough vegetables to share with their family. The Kelbaughs' determination to be good stewards of the land won them the 2010 Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Farmer of the Year Award, announced recently at the 96th Maryland Farm Bureau Annual Meeting and Convention in Ocean City. Even with the coveted award in hand, the couple's work isn't done. "Every year there's a new problem, be it putting Band-Aids on old equipment, or discovering a huge new infestation of bag worms," Gilbert Kelbaugh said. "But we signed up for it. And frankly, we wouldn't have it any other way. We've known all along that man should work with nature, not against it." The Kelbaughs' lane goes downhill toward the Muddy Run. Runoff from the fields sent torrents of water down the lane, creating deep jagged ruts. Elsewhere, the water eroded deep channels down a slope directly into the stream, carrying tons of topsoil into the Monocacy and Potomac rivers and out to the Chesapeake Bay.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

Chesapeake Bay Foundation report says cleanup will create hundreds or thousands of jobs RICHMOND, Va. — A report by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation concludes that storm water and sewage plant upgrades intended to help nurse the environmentally-battered bay back to health would create nearly 250,000 jobs. The report released Tuesday is aimed at countering claims that the multi-state, multi-billion restoration directed by the Environmental Protection Agency will be harmful to the economy and result in job losses, the foundation's president said. "That is not borne out by the facts," William C. Baker said in a statement. "Whether the target is EPA or the bay pollution

limits, it is essential that the public understand that environmental regulations will create jobs to reduce pollution, and sustain jobs that depend on clean water.” The report, called “Debunking the ‘Job Killer’ Myth,” relies on a variety of industry experts such as engineers, reports and other sources to assess the impact of water pollution projects within the six states and the District of Columbia that comprise the bay’s 64,000-square-mile watershed. It also reviews job-killing threats dating back to 1976 and Henry Ford II claimed that clean air and fuel efficiency standards would “shut down” Ford Motor Co. to illustrate historic claims that environmental efforts are bad for the economy. The report found instead that sewage and storm water projects could provide work for 240,000 full-time jobs across the bay region — engineering jobs, construction and other employment for new pollution-control projects. The job projections include the so-called multiplier effect, or jobs created as a result of economic activity because of those upgrades. “Those jobs are going to be concentrated in the large metropolitan areas because that’s where the greatest concentration of sewage and storm water occurs,” Baker said. Two key bay states, Virginia and Maryland, plan to invest a total of \$3 billion to upgrade sewage treatment plants over more than a decade. That activity alone would create an estimated 60,000 jobs, the report said.

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

Report: Environmental regulations don't hurt the economy Environmental regulations do not hurt the economy, according to a new report released today by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Putting limits on bay pollution will not only help the bay but will also stimulate job growth as people work on improving sewage-treatment plants and similar projects, said the report, entitled "Debunking the 'Job Killer' Myth." "For years, opponents of environmental regulations have argued that they cost jobs and hurt businesses. That is not borne out by the facts," said the bay foundation's president, William C. Baker, in a statement. William M. Shobe, a University of Virginia environmental economist who was not involved in the report, said the relationship between environmental regulations and the economy is "a little bit complicated." Well-designed regulations encourage cleanups by businesses and sewage plants that release pollution, which hurts people or the environment, but don't pay for it, Shobe said. Spending to comply with new regulations — say, adding new pollution controls — can aid the economy, Shobe said. "If regulations are well-designed and appropriate, they should create more benefits than costs." In one example, Shobe said, "we know that better water quality results in higher property values near the bay. There have been plenty of studies to show that." To avoid being onerous, regulations should give businesses flexibility in solving their problems, Shobe said. The new report cited the 1990 amendments to the federal Clean Air Act as just one case in which opponents said the tighter air-pollution limits would hurt businesses. Ultimately, the benefits far outweighed costs, the report said. Shobe said most experts agree that, "on net, the clean-air rules have had a positive economic contribution." But poorly designed regulations can create more costs than benefits, he said.

NEWPORT NEWS DAILY PRESS

Chesapeake Bay advocates seek \$300M in bonds for clean up (Dec. 30) Virginia bay funding is not enough, they complain. Unhappy with Gov. Bob McDonnell's proposed budget, Chesapeake Bay advocates have renewed their call for a \$300 million bond package to clean up the beleaguered estuary. "It certainly would signal that the McDonnell administration is making bay restoration a priority," said Ann Jennings, executive director of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Virginia office. The bond package — essentially, taking on long-term debt — would offset the \$359 million in requests the state Department of Environmental Quality expects to receive to help pay for wastewater treatment plant upgrades during the next decade. The upgrades will help Virginia meet the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's new plan for the bay, which aims to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment discharges by 25 percent over the next 14 years. The pollution, which comes from agricultural, industrial and municipal sources, fouls the bay's water, leading to fish kills, beach closures and other problems. If the state doesn't issue bonds, local sewer districts and other municipal powers may raise utility rates, Jennings said. The Hampton

Roads Sanitation District, which supports the bond package, has warned of annual rate increases for the next 20 years. Using bonds to pay for infrastructure projects is not uncommon — McDonnell earlier this year set aside about \$4 billion in bonds for transportation work. He pitched the plan, in part, on low interest rates and jobs the work will create. Jennings made the same argument for bay restoration bonds and said McDonnell's predecessor, Democrat Gov. Tim Kaine, approved \$250 million in bonds in 2007 for the same purpose. But convincing McDonnell, who did not include the bond package in his budget despite requests last month from the foundation and others, won't be as easy. The Republican governor has clashed with the federal EPA over bay restoration and he is looking for ways to curb spending so he can funnel money into Virginia's retirement system, higher education and other priorities. He set aside roughly \$50 million for the bay during the next two years, a figure McDonnell spokeswoman Taylor Thornley described in an email as "adequate." She declined to specifically answer questions about issuing bonds for bay restoration.

SUFFOLK NEWS-HERALD

Report: Bay regs create jobs Extensive government regulation of Chesapeake Bay pollution would create jobs, rather than kill them, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation claims in a new report. The report, "Debunking the 'Job Killer' Myth: How Pollution Limits Encourage Jobs in the Chesapeake Bay Region," was released today. It claims that the rhetoric surrounding environmental regulation is all wrong. "For years, we have seen that environmental protection policies and programs and even regulations really can stimulate the economy and create jobs," said William C. Baker, president of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. "Clearly, the rhetoric is coming from those forces that want to slow down or stop pollution control." The report comes after new agreements were signed in 2010 to attempt to reduce the amount of pollution the Chesapeake Bay. This is the third try at the goal — other attempts as far back as 1987 were unsuccessful. The difference this time, Baker said, is that there are milestones to meet every two years, rather than setting one goal 10 or 13 years in the future. "Nobody seemed to pay much attention until the last year," Baker said. "Now, there are two-year increments that have to be met, have to be reported on. If those milestones are not met, there can be penalties imposed or consequences such as a reduction in funding from the federal government. That's why we think people now believe this is a serious and real effort to save the Chesapeake Bay."

STAUNTON NEWS LEADER

Looking at the challenges of 2012 The new year seems set to bring a mild winter — but some hot politics. The economy will probably stagger along, while financial pressures will squeeze public services. Some local landmarks will loom a bit larger, with the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind opening its new dorm for the blind and finishing an eight-building, \$71 million expansion and renovation project, while Mary Baldwin College will become home to the Heifetz International Music Institute this summer. Staunton will be on the hook for \$15 million by the end of the year, when the new Western State Hospital is 80 percent completed, under the land swap deal that netted it the old hospital's 300 acre site at the intersection of Interstate 81 and U.S. 250. And as Staunton officials seek a developer, their counterparts in Waynesboro will be marketing their own, newly acquired 170 acre site at I-64's Delphine Avenue exit.

CHARLOTTESVILLE DAILY PROGRESS

Some fear Charlottesville's share of water supply will shrink with new plan Opponents of the 50-year water supply plan are coming out swinging against the proposed cost-sharing agreement between the city of Charlottesville and Albemarle County, with two city councilors saying that the deal will actually result in city residents owning rights to a smaller allocation of water. It's a charge city officials aren't jumping to deny. "We don't have the exact dollar figure, but we'll be paying — between the pipeline and the dam — upwards of \$15 to 20 million, and actually losing water supply for the city," Charlottesville Mayor Dave Norris said in an interview. Though the city will indeed have access to a larger supply of water, it will be forced to pay extra for using more than a certain amount. According to allocations dating back to 2003, Charlottesville currently has rights to 8.32 million gallons per day (MGD), but under a tentative cost-sharing deal, the city will be fully entitled to 6.71 MGD if the deal is approved, a roughly 19 percent decrease. The county, which currently has an allocation of 4.48 MGD, will end up with rights to

11.99 MGD, an increase of about 168 percent. Critics of the plan are pointing to those figures as evidence of a raw deal for city residents, but others say the comparison is off-base. The 2003 numbers were included in a cost-share agreement for an unrelated water project that was never completed, which some officials say makes the comparison far from perfect. "The water since 2003 is on a first-come, first-served basis," said Gary O'Connell, executive director of the Albemarle County Service Authority. "There's not any kind of allocation as to who uses what, so it really doesn't apply to be able to compare one to the other, which is what sounds like is being done."

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Va.)

Va. fisherman identification program registers 56k anglers in first year VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — More than 56,000 anglers complied in 2011 with a new requirement that they register with the state to fish in salt water, though the number who have notified the state is far lower than federal estimates of how many people are actually fishing. Another 80,000 people who have Virginia saltwater fishing licenses are automatically registered with the Fisherman Identification Program, bringing its rolls to about 136,000. The National Marine Fisheries Service estimates that 750,000 people go fishing in the state's salt waters each year, according to Virginia Marine Resources Commission spokesman John Bull. However, Bull said state officials have always been skeptical of that figure. "That estimate has always been a wild pie-in-the-sky best guess that the feds put together," he said. "We have thought for many years it was an excessive number. That said, part of the benefits of this registration program would be to help answer the age-old question of exactly how many people do fish in Virginia waters." Last year, federal officials started requiring nearly everyone 16 and older who fishes in salt water to register with a state or federal agency each year. It's an effort to create a phone book they can use to survey people and get a better idea of who is fishing, where they're fishing and what they're catching. Regulators want the information to determine the health of fish stocks and to provide the country's first comprehensive assessment of recreational saltwater fishing.

Coalition established to retain ban on uranium mining DANVILLE -- A coalition with some familiar names has been created to keep Virginia's 30-year ban on uranium mining in place. The Virginia Coalition includes House Del. James Edwards, former Del. Ted Bennett and retired NASCAR driver Ward Burton, The Gazette-Virginian reports. The coalition also includes Andrew Lester of the Roanoke River Basin Association. He says the association believes a raft of reports released in recent weeks all lead to the conclusion that uranium mining would be a threat to the health and safety of Virginians. Virginia Uranium Inc. has said uranium mining can be conducted safely using the industry's best practices. The Chatham company is seeking to have the ban ended so it can mine the largest known deposit of the radioactive ore in Pittsylvania County.

MISCELLANEOUS

ENERGY IN DEPTH:

What Is EPA's Philly Office Doing in Dimock? Does the Federal government recognize any limits on its authority? Students of U.S. politics can easily tell you there are such limits. In fact, if a federal agency has no authority as directly granted by Congress then it can't act. This small, but very important, fact seems to be lost on the U.S. EPA given recent correspondence from the agency's Philadelphia regional office. Otherwise, one must assume that U.S. EPA headquarters has little oversight or control of its regional offices and they are merely independent fiefdoms on missions dictated by the political philosophies of their individual directors (more after the jump). The regional office (region 3), citing no authority whatsoever, and with total disregard for the state agency with actual regulatory authority, has inserted itself into the Dimock controversy. It became involved at the request of litigants in Dimock. Its initial effort was a review of water testing data which prompted the agency to declare the data did not indicate the litigants water represented a threat to human health. Predictably, there was backlash from this truth telling. Environmental charlatans such as Josh Fox and litigants complained bitterly. Now it appears EPA is working outside of its authority to appease the litigants, and their Hollywood supporters, in what seems to be an attempt to deliver a different message that is more reflective of the agenda of anti-natural gas development

interests. This is especially troublesome as the Clean Water Act (CWA), the law which provides the U.S. EPA with authority over the nation's waters, is a law which delegates this authority to state regulatory agencies. In this case, that agency is the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP). According to the law, PA DEP is the primary regulatory authority for implementation of the CWA in Pennsylvania. In fact, except for matters that transcend state borders, the U.S. EPA's regulatory authority in Pennsylvania under the CWA is limited to implementation of the act's pretreatment program for Publicly Owned Treatment Works, no more, no less. As one considers this situation, it is important to keep in mind that not only is EPA becoming involved in an ongoing private legal battle outside of its authority, but it is doing so at the same time the agency conducts a so-called "independent" study to examine the impacts of natural gas development on water resources. Yet another important fact to keep in mind, is that U.S. EPA utilized a known natural gas "fractivist" and member of the Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition to solicit participants for the portion of the study taking place in Dimock.

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Federal Appeals Court Blocks Implementation Of EPA's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (Dec. 31) The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit Dec. 30 ordered a temporary halt to the Environmental Protection Agency's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, just days before the measure to reduce interstate transport of power plant emissions was to take effect (EME Homer City Generation L.P. v. EPA, D.C. Cir., No. 11-1302, stay ordered 12/30/11). The cross-state rule, which EPA released July 7, requires power plants in 27 states to reduce transport of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides in an effort to help downwind states meet national ambient air quality standards for ozone and fine particulate matter (76 Fed. Reg. 48,208; 131 DEN A-6, 7/8/11). The first phase of the cross-state rule was to begin Jan. 1. Additional requirements are due to take effect in 2014. The court's order stays the rule pending resolution of petitions challenging the measure filed by more than a dozen power companies, three states, and several other industry groups (197 DEN A-2, 10/12/11). In the interim, the court said, EPA is expected to continue administering the 2005 Clean Air Interstate Rule, which the cross-state rule was to replace. In 2008, the appellate court had remanded the 2005 rule to EPA over its failure to adequately ensure that upwind emissions reductions would be sufficient to help downwind states meet air quality standards (247 DEN A-2, 12/24/08). The appellate court asked the parties to submit by Jan. 17 briefing schedules that would allow oral arguments to be heard in April.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Expert: Drilling wastewater caused Ohio quakes CLEVELAND — A northeast Ohio well used to dispose of wastewater from oil and gas drilling almost certainly caused a series of 11 minor quakes in the Youngstown area since last spring, a seismologist investigating the quakes said Monday. Research is continuing on the now-shuttered injection well at Youngstown and seismic activity, but it might take a year for the wastewater-related rumblings in the earth to dissipate, said John Armbruster of Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory in Palisades, New York. Brine wastewater dumped in wells comes from drilling operations, including the so-called fracking process to extract gas from underground shale that has been a source of concern among environmental groups and some property owners. Injection wells have also been suspected in quakes in Ashtabula in far northeast Ohio, and in Arkansas, Colorado, and Oklahoma, Armbruster said.